

ABSTRACT

A method ~~for connecting~~ connects one of several customer premises equipment (CPE) via an ATM network to one of several service providers (SP). Each CPE is connected to the ATM network via a corresponding network termination point (NT). There is an access server function (ASF), having a permanent virtual connection (PVC) to each NT and a connection to each SP. A tunneling protocol is established on the permanent virtual connection between each NT and the ASF. The tunneling protocol is able to support an integrated signaling protocol. The CPE or its user select selects an appropriate SP by using the integrated signaling protocol. Routing from the CPE to the selected SP is performed by the ASF. The ASF connects the CPE to the selected SP using the integrated signaling protocol.